TO:      Mr. Keven C. Scott, Principal, East Columbus Magnet Academy

FROM:  Anthony Shelton

DATE:  June 4, 2014

RE:       School-sponsored bicycle trip to the Columbus River Walk.

Our school-improvement plan requires that the school make every effort to include parents in the activities so that we can create a bond of unity between students, teachers, parents, and the administration. Teachers are also required to increase rigor by creating innovative lesson plans that not only engage our students but to make learning fun. A school-sponsored bicycle trip/activity will do just that. According to the Georgia Performance Standards in 8th grade Social Studies students are required to know and understand the following standards:

1. **SS8H1: The student will evaluate the development of Native American cultures and the impact of European exploration and settlement on the Native American cultures in Georgia.**
2. **SS8G1: The student will describe Georgia with regard to physical features and location.**

The event, which I have titled**, “East Columbus’ 1st Annual Health and History Bike Ride**” is designed to target eighth grade students but can be used as a bridge to connect history and geography standards in sixth and seventh grade levels. It would take place around October when the average temperature began to cool off. Lessons prior to the event will focus on the relationship between human activities and natural forces and physical features. The intent is to show that development that occurred among prehistoric cultures and what happened in direct relation to changes in their environment whether by migration or natural phenomena. Hopefully it will lead to an understanding of the importance of location and physical features to the development of an area and its culture. The actual bike ride which will take place on a Saturday morning lasting 7 am to 12 to 12:30 p.m. will be the culmination of a weeklong unit lesson.

Starting at the Fall Line Trace Psalmond Road Entrance students will ride their bikes to the River walk located along Chattahoochee River which is the border of the city of Columbus and separates the state of Georgia from Alabama. First, this activity can improve their health of our students, teachers, and parents. This activity is also in line with the First Lady Michelle Obama’s desire to improve the fitness of our students. Second, it provides a challenge that can be shared and overcome by all. It is a well-known fact that when soldiers go to battle they establish a lifelong bond after they come home to their families. This is partly due to the immense challenges they had to face while in battle. Although this in no way even compares to a battlefield experience it does provide opportunities to overcome some physical challenges with the support of a teacher, parent, or other students. Experiences like these can have a positive and lasting effect on student-teacher and teacher-parent relationships. Finally, students and parents learn about their local history as they appreciate the flora and fauna that the city’s bike trail has to offer. As students are pedaling along the bike trail they get to see and experience our city’s local history and appreciate what a special place Columbus is and how it played a role in our nation’s creation and development. Since East Columbus Magnet Academy is dedicated to **providing an opportunity for all students** to obtain the necessary tools **to become lifelong learners, and** happy, functioning **citizens of a global society,** this activity help provide opportunities to do just that.

This is a very realistic activity that will undoubtedly increase student and parent content knowledge, improve the school-family-community relationship, and provide opportunities for local business and families to get to know each other through networking. It will also alleviate some of the stressors experienced by teachers and their families due to the significant amount of change within our school district.

I envision calling a meeting with representative from each of the targeted groups. The purpose of the meeting would be to explain the need for this activity, point out the goals of the activity, and assess if there is interest in supporting and sponsoring such an activity. The cost would be nothing to students and parents who have their own bikes. To those that do not, bike rentals are available. Prices for those rentals are listed below:

**Regular bikes are $6 an hour  
Tandem bikes are $10 an hour  
Child carriers are $5 flat fee**

The Social studies department will be responsible for developing a scavenger hunt along the ride that will allow students to identify and record several plants and animals seen along the trip. Students will also be responsible for recording information regarding historical sites and events such as The Last Battle of the Civil War (14th Street Bridge), The Pharmacy and Home of John Smyth Pemberton, creator of Coca Cola, and the Prince Hall Masonic Temple where Martin Luther King spoke on July 1, 1958. With the help of our PIE personnel we will plant clues along the ride that will help students answer questions as they make periodic stops on the trail. At the end of the ride students will be able to receive prizes based on their completed information sheet, received at the beginning of the trip and an award for completing the ride. A consultant fee might be required to have someone come in and provide information on the intricacies regarding points of interest along the trail along with health and safety concerns. Since providing a safe and healthy environment during the entirety of the this activity is a major concern, cost for at least two resource officers might be warranted although there are police officers who monitor the trail on bicycles. In this instance resource officers might not be necessary. Further investigation is required.

A light breakfast sandwich averaging at $2.80-$3.00 each can be provided to the Partners in Education that volunteer to serve as supporters along the route as well as providing bottled water along the activity. The average price for a 24 case of water range from $3.90 to $4.00. We could get the local businesses such as Walmart to donate or sell water at a low cost. Fruit could be served at the end of the trip. Oranges provide a great source of Vitamin C and energy boost. The average price for a 2 dozen bag of oranges range from $3.50 to $4.00.

We would solicit as many teacher and parents to serve as safety monitors throughout the trip. Again, other than providing a light breakfast for volunteers, water and possibly some fruit at the end of the trip for everyone the cost should be minimal. The cost would increase or decrease based on the total amount of students allowed to participate. We could persuade local business to help promote and support **East Columbus’ 1st Annual Health and History Bike Ride**.

I am available to discuss the matter further at your earliest convenience. I know this event and others like it will have a positive impact on our school community. Help me in my efforts to support our East Columbus family. You will not regret it.